

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN GUIDEBOOK



This publication was prepared by the **Back Country Horsemen of America** and published in partnership with the Northern, Intermountain, Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain and Pacific Southwest Regions **USDA Forest Service**.



Dedicated to future generations so they too may find the same peace and beauty we now enjoy in the back country and to the people working diligently to keep it wild.

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BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN HANDBOOK

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1. BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF AMERICA

Concern about the possibility of losing the traditional right to use recreational stock in the back country was the primary reason in forming this organization. What has always been our traditional right appears to be in question. We believe continued horse use, in harmony with the capacity of our public lands, is in the best interest of the majority of Americans. The following is the mission of Back Country Horsemen of America:

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness lands.
2. To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
3. To assist the agencies responsible for the management of public lands in meeting their goals.
4. To educate, encourage, and solicit active participation in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage and "leave no trace" principles.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new state Back Country Horsemen organizations.

We as Back Country Horsemen hope to achieve our purpose as a service group to the back country resource. We offer our time and equipment to government agencies for such tasks as packing out trash, clearing trails, building trailhead facilities and other projects which will benefit both horsemen and nonhorsemen. Our main contribution is educating people to reduce environmental impact. To further this cause we have assembled this guidebook. We have used suggestions and information from the following storehouse of knowledge: commercial outfitters and packers, backpackers, horsemen, professional foresters, resource managers, "leave no trace" personnel, and state Back Country Horsemen organizations.

The horse has earned a noble place in our Western heritage; its usefulness and devotion have been second to none. Surely it is our charge, indeed our duty, to see that horse use is preserved in its rightful place. This can best be accomplished by our individual efforts to shoulder the responsibilities of promoting wise horse use with minimum adverse impact to the back country.

2. FOREWORD

The lure of the back country is an intangible quality, generated perhaps by the pressures of our modern society. This lure affects us regardless of age or ability. Many of us have cherished the beauty and solitude of the mountains for years, while others have never had the opportunity to enjoy them. It is our fervent hope that this guidebook will provide the basic foundation for an inexperienced person to acquire the knowledge necessary for an enjoyable trip, and to instill an awareness of our responsibility to our environment. For those experienced, it is never too late to teach an old hand new techniques.

The back country is one of the few remaining sanctuaries for modern man. Away from everyday tensions a person can make an objective evaluation of oneself or a situation and gain a firmer sense of true values. Perhaps we need an occasional reminder of what insignificant creatures we really are when viewed in comparison with the magnitude of nature. Today's young generation will be the guardians of the resources of tomorrow. We could offer them no finer course than a lesson from nature's classroom on a back country trip.

In our nation today, there has finally been an awakening to the true value of our resources and a recognition of our responsibility as stewards to preserve this wealth for our children and future generations. With the proper guidance and discretion, back country resources could last forever, but if neglected and misused, they may be only memories in a short time.



3. PURPOSE

This guidebook is not a substitute for experience, responsibility, ability, or common sense, but it is an aggregation of the combined wisdom of some of the most knowledgeable horsemen of our time. These men and women have adapted their methods from the experience gained through hundreds of trips into our back country and wilderness areas. Although it was our primary objective to provide information and guidance to the inexperienced person, it is certain even an experienced horseman will benefit from this information.

There are various government agencies which are charged with the responsibility of managing our back country under different laws and regulations. It is our duty to guard these areas against adverse impact. Adverse impact has forced the closure of a few areas to horse use. The necessity to close the majority of these areas has been the result of horse misuse rather than overuse. The education of horsemen, the proper regard for our environment, and discretion in the handling and use of our horses will help eliminate the need for further closures.

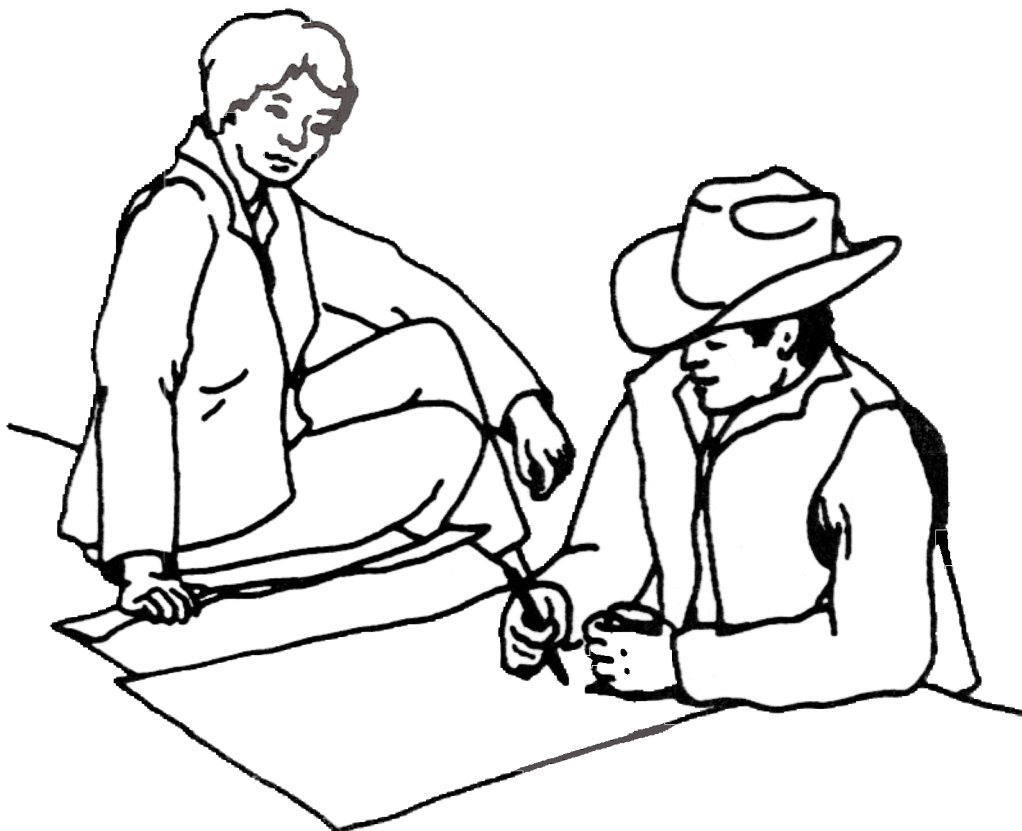
The guidebook was printed in this size for a particular reason, it will fit in your shirt pocket and was meant to be taken with you.



4. PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

There's an old saying that the success of a trip depends on preparation. This is especially true of back country trips. On a pack trip you have your animals and camp to consider as well as your personal gear. Concern for the environment dictates you include only necessary items. Many horsemen use checklists to help them in traveling light, while insuring they have what they need when they pitch camp. A check list is provided in the appendix of this guidebook.

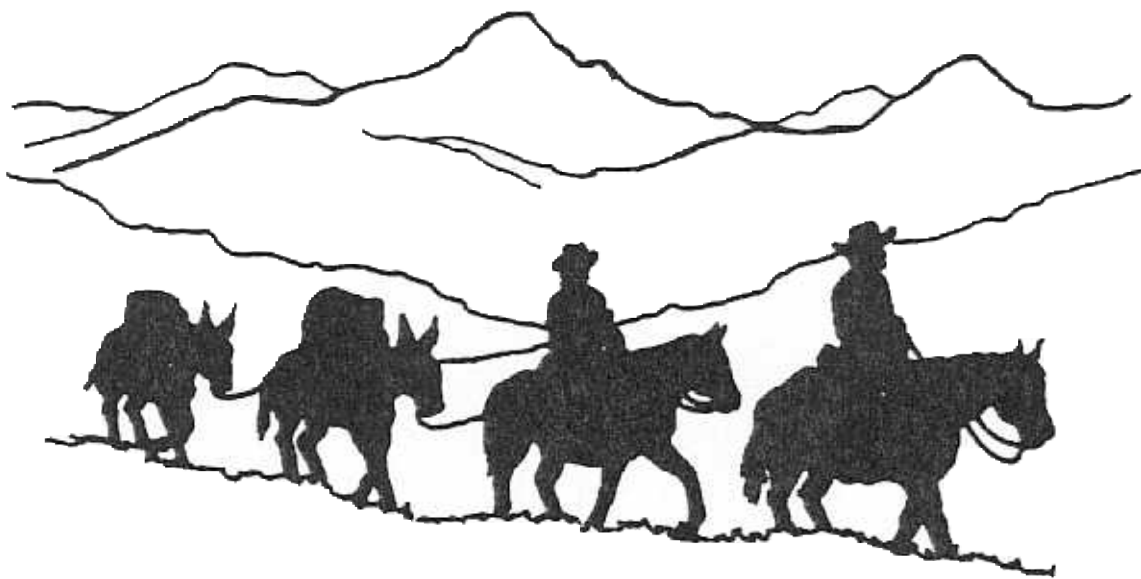
It would be advisable to contact someone who has recent knowledge of the area or the land manager's office when planning a trip. The availability of horse feed and condition of the trails must be considered. It may be necessary to pack in weed seed free horse feed, especially in alpine areas. Dead wood for fires can be scarce in high country. A gas stove may be required for cooking. In country new to you, a topographic map and the ability to read it are vital. A compass should also be included in your gear. There are many excellent books available on both map reading and compass use. The USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region puts out an excellent document, Recreation Aid No. 2, "Map and Compass."



Storms come up quickly in the mountains. Snow or cold rain can be expected any time of the year even though the sky may have been blue and clear when you started out. The bottom line is to be prepared and have a plan.

It is important to always carry a good knife, a flashlight, and fire starting material whether you are out for one day or many. Always be prepared for cold, wet weather. On pack trips an ax, a shovel, and a water container are useful and may be required in some areas. A saw may be necessary if larger blowdowns are expected. Finally, carry good first aid kits for both horse and rider.

In organizing your trip, plan to take the minimum number of stock needed to make your trip successful. We must use minimum impact techniques or we will be regulated out of the back country. The least number of animals cause less impact on the land. There is a great variety of light weight camp, cooking and sleeping gear available. The right selections will reduce weight and bulkiness. In wilderness, parks, etc., it is advisable to check with administrative agencies to learn of any limitation on stock numbers. As a guide, one pack animal per two persons is sufficient. Naturally you must consider the length of the trip and forage availability.



5. STOCK

An ideal mountain horse should have a quiet, gentle disposition, good stamina, be well conditioned and be reliable under all conditions. Few of our equine friends possess all these wonderful qualities without considerable training. To be reliable under all conditions a high strung horse will require more handling than a quieter animal. A high strung horse may also cause more damage due to pawing and trampling. Hobbling this type of animal while on the high line will reduce the impact and the noise. In the interest of continued use of the back country, we must consider the long term consequences this type of horse can cause.

If you are buying a horse for the mountains, you should select one with good withers, legs and feet, and with a disposition suited to your ability.

Like most domestic animals, horses have a descending order of authority or "pecking order". Usually a mare will be the leader of a herd unless a stud is present. Caution must be used in the placement of horses in a pack string, at a hitch rail, or in a truck to avoid trouble or injury. Some horsemen prefer geldings over mares, while many feel that individual disposition is more important than the sex. Some mares can be troublesome during estrus.

Like people, horses are individuals, and although they usually follow general behavior patterns, they sometimes react differently in the same situation. A horse that is completely reliable under any other condition may have an abnormal fear of one thing. Training, and the methods used, play a large part in shaping a horse's behavioral patterns. Due to the individuality of the horse, methods of training must often be tailored to its particular disposition. If you borrow horses, you have the disadvantage of knowing little of the horse's temperament. When you know the bad habits of your stock, you can anticipate possible problems and avoid trouble.

Shoes should be checked often. In the spring, they tend to loosen more because the hoof grows faster. It would be advisable to carry spare shoes, a few nails, rasp and hammer. You also need to learn how to nail a shoe back on. If you don't know, carry an "Easy Boot". If a horse throws a shoe and you don't replace it, use the rasp to angle the outside of the

hoof where it meets the ground to prevent chipping. A horse should have his load lightened if it throws a shoe and the shoe is not replaced.



6. TRAINING

Before we continue, the following three things should be stressed:

1. The use and final training of a horse for the mountains differs considerably from pleasure riding and gaming events even though the basic early training of a young horse will not differ substantially.

2. A back country trip offers a great deal of pleasure, but sometimes there are hazards involved. A knowledge of acceptable methods of dealing with these hazards is necessary to insure safety.

3. Lots of miles and "wet saddle blankets" are the best training aids a horseman can have.

If you're using inexperienced mountain horses, there are a number of things your horses should learn before they leave familiar ground. A horse must be halter-broken and accustomed to standing tied for extended periods. Tie your horse in the corral at home for a few days before a trip as practice. The horse must be acquainted with any type of terrain you may encounter, including bogs, creeks, deadfalls, trees and narrow trails. Even a gentle horse can become nervous and unpredictable under strange conditions. It will help to develop confidence in a green horse if he makes his first trip with seasoned companions. Often a young horse can be led over or through obstacles that it wouldn't readily negotiate while ridden. A horse must develop confidence in the rider, and the rider must develop confidence in the horse. Another important point is never allow a horse to refuse to do something he is capable of

doing. The extra initial time spent in training will eliminate many problems later if the horse realizes it must obey. On the other hand, we shouldn't ask a horse to do something that it is not capable of or trained for.

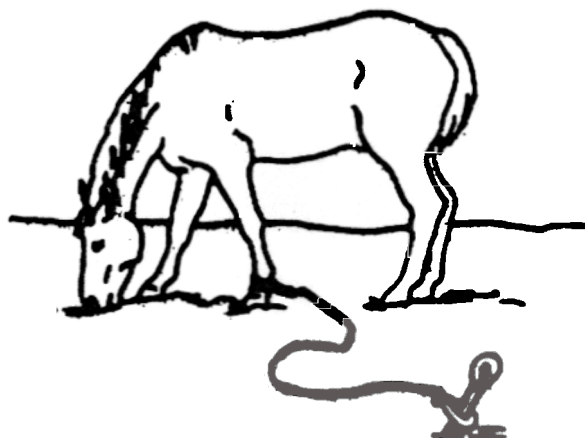
An animal should also be trained in whatever method of restraint you're planning to use. It's far safer to teach a horse to hobble or picket in your own corral or pasture than in a rocky mountain meadow. A horse should also be trained so it can be mounted from either side. It's almost impossible to mount from the downhill side when on a hillside trail.

Your horse should be trained to accept a rope around or under its tail. This is a common occurrence when leading a pack horse. If your lead horse is not trained to lift its tail and let the rope fall out, you are in for an unexpected rodeo, the consequence of which may be serious. A good way to begin this training is called "rodding". Begin with the horse in a stall or corral, take a short section of broom handle or dowel, lift the tail, place the rod sideways under the tail. Normally a horse will clamp its tail down on the rod. Leave it there. Eventually the horse will learn to lift its tail letting the rod fall out. When the horse will no longer clamp down on the rod, continue the training using a rope.

If your horse has not been around llamas, backpackers, dogs, mountain bikes or motorized vehicles, an "encounter session" at home before you enter the back country will be very worthwhile.

You can prepare your stock for multiple nights in the back country by taking them on shorter trips several times before your longer trip, which also gives you the opportunity for a "shakedown" trip.

In summation, a good mountain horse needs to be trained to deal with whatever it is likely to encounter in the back country, including, but



not necessarily limited to, the following:

- loading & hauling
- standing tied
- hobbles
- picket rope
- crossing water and streams
- rope under the tail
- crossing downed trees and other obstacles
- crossing boggy areas
- crinkling noise of maps or plastic rain gear
- fly repellent spray bottles
- sudden movement of birds, wildlife and dogs
- sudden appearance of hikers with large packs above heads
- motorcycles
- tolerating other animals on the trail, including llamas
- loud jet airplane noise overhead and gunfire

7. HAULING STOCK

Unless horses have had a bad experience, they are normally good travelers. Horses being transported should be tied short and lower than is usual in other situations. This will prevent them from rearing or getting a foot over the rope. Horses should be tied to the sides of the truck, alternating head to rump. Hauling a load of horses requires extra driving care. Take corners slowly and avoid quick starts and sudden stops. Whatever you use to convey horses should have a floor with good footing. Two inches of sand works well in a stock truck, while rubber mats with a non-slip tread should be used in a pickup bed or trailer. Never haul a horse in a pickup with a metal floor without using a rubber mat or sand. A green horse will load better if preceded by an experienced animal. Practice with them before you plan to start your trip. In practicing, just load them the first time, don't move the truck. A horse must always have good footing when loading or unloading, never leave a crack that it can get its foot through and be sure there is good footing outside the trailer or truck because steep grades, slick ice, mud or wet pavement can create serious slip hazards. The important point to remember about loading is to practice at home, again and again . . .

8. SADDLES AND TACK

Before you start your trip, all gear should be checked. Your saddle should fit you and the horse. Examine the saddle from the animal's perspective: check for protruding nails or places where wear can sore the animal. All leather should be oiled periodically to protect it. Latigos, cinches and reins should be checked for wear. It's advisable to adjust all pack-saddles before you leave on your trip. This will save time at the trailhead, and reduce the time a packhorse will have to stand loaded before the whole string is ready. Once adjusted, the saddles should be labeled so they are always used by the same animal. If you're using borrowed equipment, masking tape can be used for labels. If packs are mantied or boxes loaded before you leave home, they should be labeled in pairs of equal weights.

Tack must fit the horse and the rider. A horse with a bad saddle sore isn't much of an asset. A quarter horse bar tree usually fits most horses. If the tree is a little too wide in the wither area, then a build up pad can be used or more padding if the whole tree is a little too wide. If the tree is too narrow, no matter what you do, the back of the horse will be sore. Be sure you have enough clearance between the horse's withers and the gullet of the saddle.

Double-rigged saddles have some advantages on mountain trails. They should be rigged so the cinch is a little farther back to prevent sores behind the front leg, the strap between the cinches should be adjusted and the back cinch in contact with the horse's stomach to prevent sideways movement and to help keep the pads in place. Three quarter rigging is the best position for mountain riding. A full or 7/8 rigging is too far forward for mountain riding because it can gall the horse. Some people prefer a saddle with a high cantle for mountain use. However, the higher cantle shouldn't be used to brace against when riding uphill, keep your weight forward and help your horse.

Stirrups should be adjusted so that you can place just three fingers between your crotch and the saddle when standing in the stirrups. Ride relaxed but alert, with the ball of your foot in the stirrup and about 1/3 of your weight on your feet.

A properly adjusted breast collar is an advantage when riding in rugged country. Breast collars should be fastened to the rings installed for that purpose or off the 'D' rings, and in a manner so there is no

possibility of interference with the horse's breathing. A crupper or britchin can also be added and is recommended for a horse with poor withers or round back. A horse can be ridden with a looser cinch if a breast collar and crupper or britchin are used. A cinch that is too tight is one of the chief causes of cinch sores. On a properly saddled horse, you should be able to insert your fingers between the cinch and the horse's body without undue trouble but you should feel pressure from both. Breast collars must be kept soft so they won't cut. Roper style breast collars are a good choice.

Fabric covered foam pads or "Kodel" fleece pads are excellent and have the advantage of being washable. They should be of a firm consistency and two inches thick. If hair pads are used, a packhorse should have two pads and a saddle horse a pad and a blanket. Don't ever lay a pad or blanket directly on the ground as it will pick up debris that could sore a horse's back.

Any good nylon halter is adequate. Flat nylon has the advantage of not creasing a horse's nose and has a larger bearing surface over the poll. The halter should be adjusted so that it can't be rubbed off. It's unsafe to turn a shod horse loose wearing a halter; it could get its hoof caught while trying to scratch with a back leg.

For most people, a nine-to ten-foot lead rope seems to be about right. If the rope is attached through the halter ring and around the animal's neck, it must be longer. Manila 1/2" in diameter would be minimum, but soft nylon or poly plus rope is much better. These ropes are stronger and won't rot, and can be stored when wet. Make your lead rope from a length a little over a foot longer than the finished product. Braid a small eye in one end for attaching the snap (bull snaps are recommended) and braid the other end back.

Saddle bags on your riding horse should be loaded lightly because they are sitting over the horse's loin - the weakest part of the horse's back. There are many large cantlepack/saddlebag systems that can be easily overloaded to the detriment of your horse and your ease of mounting and dismounting. The best location on your saddle horse for carrying heavier items is off the front of the saddle.

If pack stock are used, a spare cinch, latigo and lead rope should be carried. In an emergency, the lead rope from your saddle horse can be used on a pack horse. A knife with a leather punch, pliers, small rolls of

stove wire and electrical tape, and nylon or leather boot laces will make most emergency tack repairs.

9. PACK SADDLES

At first, man packed his animals without the use of a saddle, but as time passed different types of saddles were developed. Today the two most popular styles are the "sawbuck" and the "Decker". Which one is best? There are arguments for both, but what works best for you is the type to use. Either type usually has a britchin and a breast collar, which must be adjusted so the tree is held in the proper position, just behind the withers. Each should have two straps (called "quarter straps"), one from the britchin to the tree and the other to the cinch. "Quarter straps" keep the britchin from hiking up under the tail of the pack animal. The rigging should never be adjusted so tight that it galls the animal.

The sawbuck usually has two girths (double rigged). There are two basic types of sawbuck trees: the "Tehama" which is wider and fits mules and quarter-type horses the best, and the "Humane" which fits slimmer horses. A sawbuck saddle is less expensive, lighter and a bit more stable on the animal's back because of the double rigging. It does not have the wide range of adjustment found on the Decker since there is no adjustment on the placement of the rigging rings nor on the angle of the bars of the saddle.

The Decker has a padded cover (called a half-breed) that is placed over the D's of the tree. Near the bottom of the half-breed there is usually a 1" x 4" board that helps to spread the load on the side of the animal. Usually single rigged, the latigo passes over the side board in cinching the single girth around the animal. The rigging ring may be moved forward or backward on the animal, and the D's may be heated and bent to achieve the optimum fit of the wooden bars to the backs of individual animals. The Decker is usually heavier, and more expensive than a sawbuck.

The appendix lists books that are good sources for additional information on how to select the right pack saddle for your use.

10. PACK EQUIPMENT

The equipment used to pack horses and mules varies from region to region, and it would be impossible in the space available to describe it all. This section will be devoted to the basic equipment. Side loads on pack animals use one of the following four basic kinds of equipment:

1. Pack Boxes - are used in almost all systems of packing. They are used in pairs, and vary in size with an average of about 22 " in length, 11" in depth and 16 " in height. Larger animals can carry proportionally larger boxes. They are hung from the pack tree either with loops or hooks or are suspended with slings of rope or "pack slings". Boxes are used to protect breakable items, to provide better organization of small items, to provide storage while in camp, and to be used as tables or seats. Pack boxes made of aluminum or steel with locking lids can be used for bear-proof storage of food. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee certifies specific types of panniers and pack boxes.

2. Pack Slings - May be of rope as in the Decker packing system or made of leather straps attached to a bar that is slung from the pack saddles with loops. At the bar they are usually 22" wide and have straps up to 7' in length. They are useful to sling pack boxes, duffel bags, bales of hay and anything else too large for pack bags or boxes.

3. Pack bags - made of leather, canvas, man made fabric or a combination of these, and use loops to suspend them from the pack tree. They may be open-topped or covered. Pack bags are soft sided, making them more flexible to use than a box. They are useful for packing small items, duffel bags, sacks of grain, etc.

4. Mantied Packs - Usually used on Decker saddles - are bundles of camp gear and equipment that are wrapped in canvas and tied into equally weighted pairs to be slung with rope from the pack saddle. Unusually shaped items, bales of hay, and a wide assortment of items may be side loaded in this manner.

Other equipment needed for most packing systems follows:

1. Lash Rope - A rope with a lash cinch that is used to tie the "diamond" and other hitches to secure loads to pack animals. Depending on the kind of hitch tied, the rope can vary in length from 35' to 50' and usually either 3/8" to 1/2" in diameter. Manila, multi-filament poly plus, nylon or cotton may be used. Nylon is the strongest and stays soft when wet, but tends to stretch when new. Cotton is easiest on the hands, but is least durable and is miserable when wet. The lash cinch is made with a ring in one end and a specially designed hook in the other. The cinch body can be made of leather, canvas or mohair and may vary in length from 25" to 35".

2. Pack Cover (Mantie) - This is used to protect the pack from water or dust. It is usually made of canvas or cotton duck and varies in size with the smallest about 5' x 7'. (A mantie of 7' x 8' will handle even the largest loads you might wish to sling.) They sometimes have grommets in corners to facilitate use in setting up camp. A mantie is also useful to cover saddles and pack equipment while in camp.

3. Integrated System - There are several packing systems on the market that integrate side load and top load together in a combination of boxes and bags that are secured to the animal with a system of nylon straps and buckles. This system can be useful to those who do not wish to master the various rope hitches used.

4. Over the Saddle Pack Bags - There are two pack bags that are fastened together at the top and are designed to be used with an ordinary western saddle. They usually have openings for the pommel and cantle. These types can be stabilized using a pack hitch with lash cinch to help center, balance, and contain the load on the saddle properly, making it much easier on the horse. Over the saddle pack bags are handy to use when an additional riding saddle is needed after camp is set up.

The appendix lists several useful books that list equipment in much greater detail, and also illustrate the various hitches used in packing animals.

11. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

The comfort and well-being of the horseman is fundamental to a safe and pleasurable trip into the back country. Clothing and personal effects must be adequate enough to protect from weather extremes and practical enough to serve one's needs well.

Wear clothes that are soft and will not rub. A Western hat has many advantages in the mountains. It will protect you from the sun, rain, or snow, and small branches. A straw hat is ideal in warm weather, a felt hat in cold weather. A plastic hat cover is useful. Gloves, preferably leather, are a must. A sharp knife should be carried in a front pocket or on a belt. A cased folding knife with a locking blade is a good choice.

A good plan for your clothing is to use the "layering" method used by mountaineers. This allows you to remove or add clothing to suit weather conditions. Avoid loose clothing which may catch on the saddle horn or branches. Try to use wool or moisture wicking synthetics for your comfort and safety.

A slicker should be carried on your saddle horse. Weather changes rapidly in the mountains. Accustom your horse to your putting on a slicker. A warm jacket should be carried even in warm weather. Chaps are useful; they'll turn a lot of water, protect your legs, provide warmth, and have the added advantage of not bunching up in the saddle. The nylon rain chaps worn by hikers are handy because they can be rolled up and kept in the saddle bag when not being used. **Remember**, don't wait until you are wet to put on rain gear.

Wear some type of boot with a riding heel. If much hiking or mountain climbing is planned, extra footwear should be taken for the purpose. Tennis shoes are handy around camp and help minimize area impact but should never be placed in a stirrup. Vibram soles are also dangerous because they tend to hang up in a stirrup. If tapaderos are used, they should have solid bottoms. Tapaderos are advised for all youngsters so that feet do not slide through stirrups or allow branches to go through and hang up in the stirrups.

12. HORSE CARE

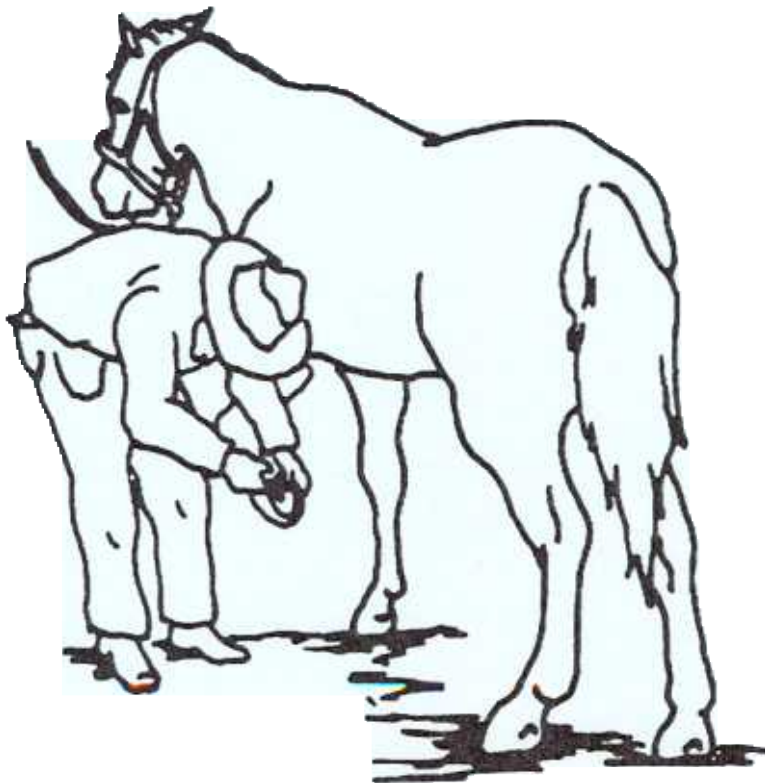
Your horse will provide many pleasurable trips into the back country. It deserves consideration and care to keep it healthy and satisfied. There are many fine books on the market which provide excellent tips and instructions in keeping and caring for stock. In this section we will only cover a few items which pertain to horse use in the back country.

Insect repellent for both you and your horse is a must. An animal can't rest or stand quietly when being eaten by insects. There are many good products on the market. If you use a spray, your horse must be accustomed to its use.

Safe grain bags or "nose" bags are useful to contain the grain or pellets fed to the horse.

In the spring when your stock is soft, take an extra pack animal. If the animal is young, load light. The same is true if the stock is inexperienced or you are going into especially rough or steep country. Be considerate of your stock and you may have fewer problems.

During the early part of summer your horse will be shed out and short haired. It is common to have frost at night and occasionally snow. If space permits on a pack trip or if you are camping at the trailhead, your horses will rest better and feel better if they are blanketed.



13. ON THE TRAIL

Many trailheads provide an opportunity to register or respond on the condition of the trail. Please register or respond. It is important to horsemen that the extent of equine use in the back country be documented by the agencies.

The old saying goes "the shortest distance between two points is a straight line". When riding the trail, it may be the shortest but not the best. Short-cutting across switchbacks in the trail should not be done. It creates a new tread, which is usually steep, causing erosion and gullies. Cutting switchbacks also constitutes abuse of our resource and the hoof prints that remain are a signature of who is to blame.

Many experienced horsemen tie a knot in split reins or otherwise fasten them together when in the back country. If a rein is dropped and stepped on, it could be broken, or your horse may act up. You may be using one hand for a packhorse lead rope, and your reining hand for dodging limbs occasionally. If you stop to adjust a pack, split reins must be secured or they will end up under the horse's feet. One way to secure them is to take a wrap around the horn and shove them through the latigo keeper slot.

Caution must always be used in handling the lead rope of the pack horse. Either carry it in your hand or take one wrap around the horn and place the end under your leg. The safest is to keep the rope in-hand. **Never** tie a lead rope to the saddle horn hard-and-fast! The lead rope should be changed from side to side or on the downhill side of the leading horse when traversing dangerous narrow trails. This will sometimes steer an anxious pack string or following horse to the danger side rather than push your saddle horse off the trail into trouble.

Regardless of what you see in the movies, never tie a horse by the reins. Always tie or lead with a lead rope which is either fastened to a halter under the bridle or passed under a bosal and tied around the horse's neck.

There are several good books listed in the appendix which cover more details on packing, camping and trail riding techniques.

14. TRAIL COURTESY

Trail courtesy is largely dependent upon the attitude of the individu-

als involved. It's infrequent that a person has a problem with someone using the same mode of transportation, but most of us know little of the problems of the other users. A better understanding of these problems will be helpful. In wilderness areas, only the hiker, the horseman and the llama user are involved. In other areas motorcycles or mountain bicycles may be encountered. The only aspect that we can write on with any degree of authority is that concerning the horseman and hiker, mountain biker, or motorcycle rider.

Encounters between hikers and horsemen are common and should cause no problems if each respects the other's situation. A horseman often has pack animals as well as his personal mount to control. The necessity for a firm hand and fast action leaves little time for social amenities. In the excitement of the moment a horseman's concern can easily appear to be arrogance. One thing that the horseman must remember is that the horses are his responsibility and that the hiker has every right to be on the trail, and deserves common courtesy. Another point that is probably not understood by most hikers is that a horseman leading a pack string can seldom afford the luxury of stopping to chat. Pack strings have an affinity for getting into trouble when stopped.

When a string of horses meets a hiker on the trail, the hiker should make his presence known to the horseman as soon as practical by talking to the rider. This will let the horses know there is a person in that big package of nylon. The hiker should step off the trail on the low side. Few hikers know this, so be patient. The horseman and hiker should continue to talk until the pack string has passed so that the horses will be aware of the hiker's presence. Some hikers feel safer if there is a tree between them and the trail, but there is little danger if the horses are aware of the hiker and don't become startled. A pack string overtaking a hiker owes the courtesy of holding the horses in check until the hiker can find a suitable place to step off the trail. If a pack string is overtaken by a hiker, the horseman should find a good spot to let the hiker pass. The horseman should remember the following: the hiker is packing a load, may be tired and it requires extra effort for the hiker to move off the trail. It may require little effort on the horseman's part to move aside. Be considerate.

In all cases common sense and courtesy are more important than who has the right of way. Usually the horsemen will hear a motorcycle approaching before it comes into sight. Look for a chance to pull off the

trail. A motorcycle makes more noise than most horses will tolerate at close range. When meeting a string of horses, a cycle rider should shut off his engine and move his machine as far off the trail as practical. When overtaking a string of horses, a cycle rider should stay well behind the horses until the horseman can find a suitable spot to pull his horses off the trail to allow him to pass. A few minutes delay could well mean the difference between a minor inconvenience and possible injury.

Mountain bikes are quiet and not often heard in advance. When in an area used by mountain bikers, be especially alert for any indication of their approach - unusual colors, voices, horses' ears and attitudes. When meeting a string, a mountain biker should pull off the trail as far as practical. When overtaking a string, a bike rider should stay well behind the horses until the horseman can find a suitable place to pass. Continuing to talk to the biker as the horses pass reassures the horses that there is a person with the bike and reduces the fear factor.

There can occasionally be problems between different horse groups. Two basic rules are (1) you use the right hand trail in a divided trail system; and (2) the loaded string has the right of way. However, we can't always choose the places where we must pass and discretion will save a lot of broken halter ropes. Ridden horses should always give way to a pack string and usually a small string should give way to a larger one. Naturally, children and novices deserve extra consideration.

On high rocky trails it may be necessary to backtrack a considerable distance to find a suitable place to pass. Turning your string around may require you to turn each animal around separately and reverse the order. **Remember to turn the horse with its head to the down hill side.** In this manner it can see where it places its feet on the trail. Patience is a true virtue in these situations.



15. HOLDING AND TYING

The best method to graze livestock is free roaming either in public pastures or in selected locations where stock can be contained by drift fences or natural obstacles. However, this method is not practical under many circumstances. Therefore, the most widely-used method of restraint is by alternately tying and turning the horses loose to graze for a specified length of time.

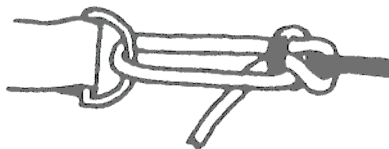
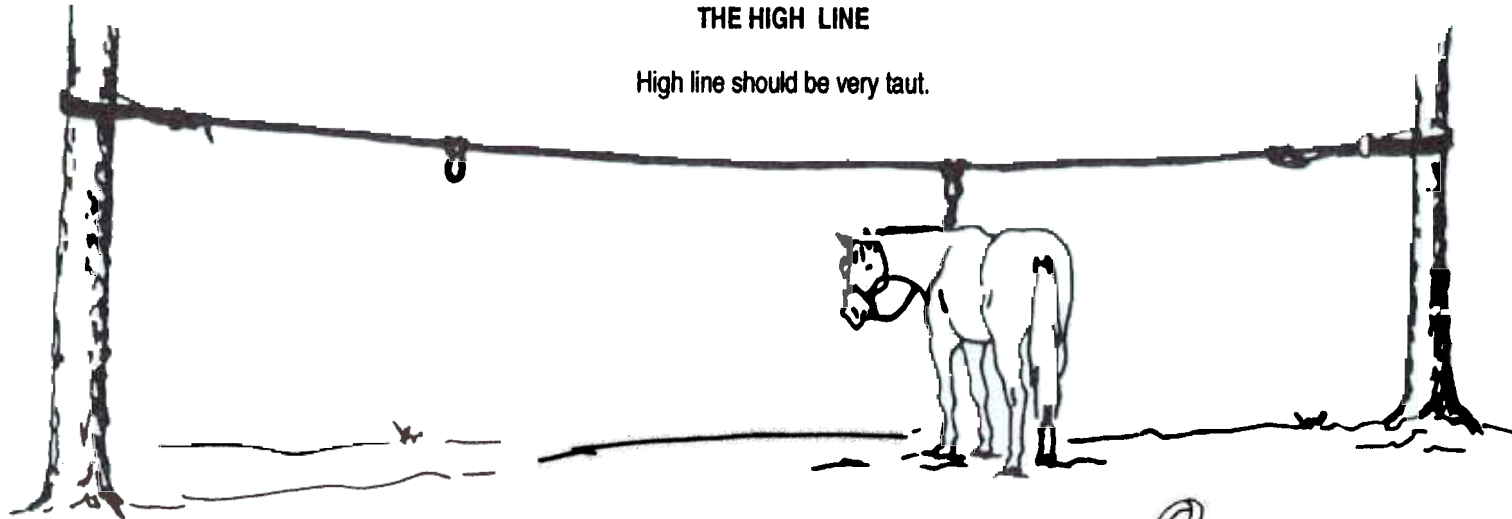
The nature of the stock, the location, and the method of holding all have an effect on the degree of trampling and soil disturbance that takes place. Some horses are more prone to pawing. The following measures are recommended to reduce environmental damage when using stock in the back country. Wet, marshy areas are very susceptible to damage and should be avoided. Tying stock in the immediate camp area is discouraged. The pawing and trampling that may occur creates an over-used appearance and dusty conditions in the camp area. Lake shores and stream banks are especially subject to trampling. Over-grazing and caving in of banks may occur if stock is confined close by. All land management agencies require stock to be contained a minimum of 200 feet away from lake shores and stream banks.

A hitch rack, high line, or electric fence are the recommended methods of confining stock. Hitch racks should be placed where the soil is hard and rocky. Hitch racks and high lines should be back in the trees where the impact will be less noticeable and less damaging to the ground cover. Horses should be tied so their heads can't reach the ground. This will help prevent getting a foot over the rope. When feeding, the lead rope may be loosened so the bottom of the nosebag can rest on the ground. Remember to shorten the lead rope after feeding. Never use a nosebag on a loose horse. If it gets to water it may fill the nosebag with water and drown.

A preferred method of tying horses is with the use of a high line. This is a line stretched (approximately seven feet above the ground) between two trees using a tree saver strap on each tree. Lead ropes are tied along the high line so that the halter snap is two feet from the ground. This allows the horse to lie down yet not get tangled. A rule of thumb is tie horses shorter when you will not be nearby or be able to see them such as at night. Horses seem more relaxed and content when tied to a high line than with other methods. They seldom pull against the line

THE HIGH LINE

High line should be very taut.



Tie one end with a bowline knot.

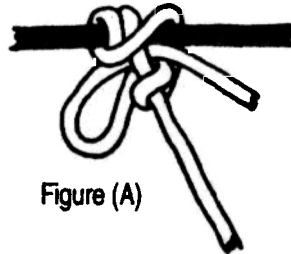


Figure (A)



Use a Dutchman on the other end to tighten

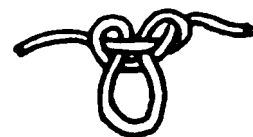
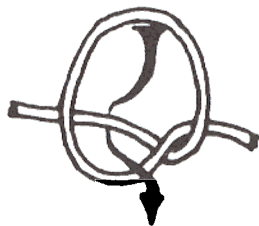


Figure (B)

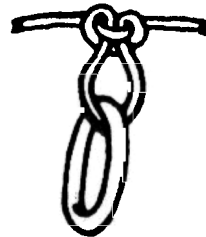
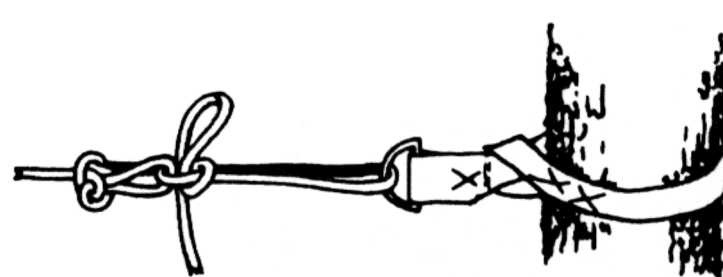


Figure (C)



The tree should be protected with padding, a cinch, or by using a "tree saver strap". The "tree saver" can be made from a 2" wide nylon seat belt. Obtain the strap from an auto wrecking yard. Sew a 4" loop in one end and a 2" D-ring in the other end. This can be sewn on your home machine using nylon thread or may be purchased.

because there is nothing solid to pull against.

Where the high line goes around the tree, the bark should be protected by padding, such as a cinch or gunny sack. A 2" wide nylon "tree saver" strap is a good choice. Never use your lash cinch to fasten one end of a tether line; most lash hooks can break easily as well as the canvas portion. In addition, the lash cinch can absorb tree pitch which could make your pack animal very uncomfortable.

The high line prevents the horse from getting around the tree, damaging the bark or root system. As with other methods of restraining horses, the high line should be set up away from the immediate camp area - away from the trail and back in the trees where the least ground cover will be disturbed.

The lead rope may be tied directly to the high line as shown in Figure (A), or a loop knot, Figure (B), can be tied at intervals along the high line. A 2" ring or swivel snap can be placed on the end before the loop knot is tied. This is handy because the loop knot has a tendency to tighten on the lead rope making it difficult to untie.

The loop knot can always be loosened and moved to suit any spacing or situation. If the lead rope is tied directly to the high line as shown in Figure (A); a half hitch thrown over the loop will keep it from working loose.

There are three things to be cautious about when using the high line:

1. There must be a swivel in the lead rope or it will become twisted or unraveled as the horse moves around.

2. If the lead is tied too long the horse may get a leg over the lead or may become tangled if it rolls.

3. A saddled animal should not be tied on the high line because damage to the saddle and/or death to the animal could result.

Again, the high line is to keep stock from damaging trees or their root systems. If the lead rope is allowed to slide along the high line, it defeats the purpose of this method unless stops in the high line approximately 10' away from each tree are utilized.

Half-inch hemp rope makes a good high line. Nylon is too stretchy. Multi-filament poly plus rope is best. It will stretch more than hemp, but is stronger, lighter, and will not soak up water. Many horsemen use the

lash ropes from their pack saddles for the high line.

A hitch rail can be easily constructed by tying a solid pole between two good-sized trees if a deadfall pole can be found. The horses should be tied on the opposite side of the tree from the pole so that the strain is against the trees rather than the rope-ties. The hitch rail should be trimmed closely. (This is generally not recommended in wilderness areas.)

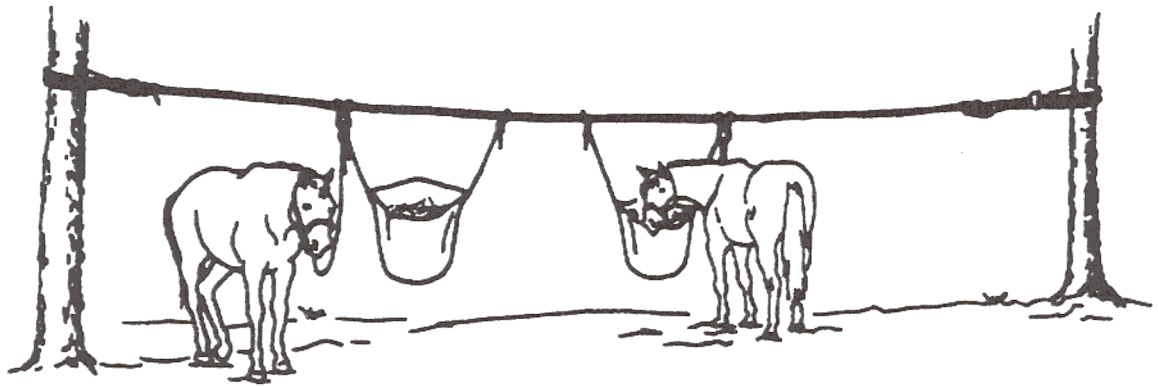
The tying area must be located off the trail and away from water or boggy areas. An area with hard rocky ground that catches enough breeze to discourage insects is ideal. Some horses will become restless and paw while tied. A pair of hobbles will discourage this bad habit.

Another method of holding horses which may be particularly useful where feed must be packed in is a temporary corral. A corral allows the horses some movement while still keeping them contained. Select a spot for your corral away from trails or water and if possible on hard rocky ground. Temporary corrals should be made as large as practical. The size will depend on tree spacing, but a 30' diameter corral would be about right for five horses. Corrals can be made of rope and usually should be made from two ropes. The top rope should be at least belt high and the bottom 18" lower. Mantie and cargo ropes can be used to build a corral. If down timber is available, a good corral can be made by tying poles to trees. Leave the branches on all but the inside and make sure there are no short limbs to injure a horse. Don't corral strange horses together. Corrals should be taken down when you leave. Rope corrals are ten times heavier than electric fencing and are not recommended due to the weight and bulk.

Portable electric corrals are good for stock familiar with electric fences. They are lightweight, efficient and can be moved to facilitate rotation. Electric fences may not be suitable to confine stock at night in bear country.

A ration of grain, evening and morning, will help teach a horse that camp is "home". Carry extra grain or pelletized feed in areas where graze is sparse. The effort to stop the spread of noxious weeds into the back country has caused the prohibition on packing uncertified hay or unprocessed grain into some wildernesses and other areas. Processed grain, pelletized or certified weed seed free hay are excellent substitutes. Processed grain has been rolled, ground or otherwise treated so

that it will not germinate. Alfalfa pellets are a good substitute for hay but you must accustom your stock to eating pellets before the trip. Alfalfa cubes that are not heat treated during processing are unacceptable since any weed seeds in them are still viable. Contact the local land manager to determine any feed restrictions.



16. GRAZING

Horses grazing on good grass cause little adverse impact, but keeping them in the area where you want them and not heading for the truck can be a problem.

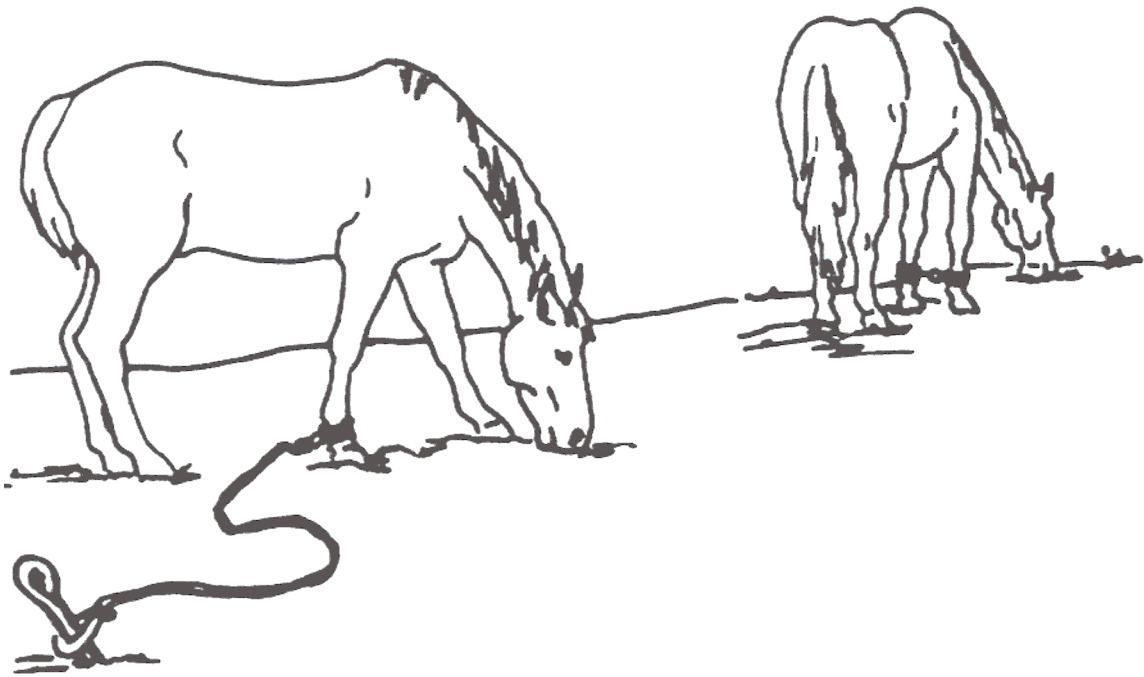
There are several methods of limiting travel during grazing. Loose grazing or hobbling are the best choices. Picketing should be used only if the other two choices are not feasible. Picketing is hard on range area, potentially harmful to horses, and is not allowed by some land management agencies. However, picketing is satisfactory in suitable terrain and may be the only alternative.

Unless you're particularly fond of walking, always keep a wrangle horse contained near camp whenever horses are turned loose to graze. Tying two wrangle horses is better than one. Most horses get nervous and excited when left alone and may paw the ground or cause other damage. Usually two horses will remain relatively calm even if the other horses are out of sight. Also a single horse is more likely to break loose. Then you are on foot. (The tied or picketed wrangle horses must be rotated to insure an adequate grazing period.) Almost any group of horses has at least one animal that wouldn't leave the rest under any condition. If time is short, this horse could be used as a wrangle horse and turned loose after the rest are tied for the night.

Bells help keep track of horses and make strayed horses much easier to find. When turning horses loose to graze, bell all mares, loners or animals that have a tendency to stray. Bell straps should fit reasonably snug to prevent them from getting caught. Bells with a higher pitch seem to carry farther in the woods. If several horses are belled, bells of different pitches should be used. Weather conditions vary the distance that sound travels.

Hobbles are one method of restricting a horse's movement so it won't travel great distances, yet permit enough freedom to graze. Only a grazing hobble with at least a one inch strap should be used. Hobbles are more effective on some horses than on others. Some horses soon learn to travel quite rapidly wearing hobbles. These horses can be slowed down by placing a half hobble on a rear leg and a sideline fastened to the hobble in front. When horses are turned out to graze, all should be

hobbled any are hobbled A hobbled horse will sore himself trying to keep up with horses running free



On good grass a hungry horse usually will be content to graze for two to three hours and seldom lift his head. possible the camp should be located between the grazing area and the direction of the truck. The horses should be checked frequently they can be seen from camp A bell on the lead or dominant horse will be helpful The grazing period should be just before the evening feeding. This helps to hold the horses and makes them easier to catch. An advantage of grazing that if water available a horse can drink when wants to.

Picketing horses a satisfactory method suitable terrain The area must be free of obstacles so the rope won't tangle. You will have fewer problems you picket by a front foot rather than from the halter or neck A half-hobble with a swivel, or snap and swivel should be used to attach the picket rope The other end of the rope should have a loop tied with a non-slip knot so that will rotate around the picket pin rather than wind up. Some people make up special picket ropes which are pulled

through discarded plastic garden hoses. The hose prevents rope burns and the extra stiffness helps keep it from tangling. The pin or stake must be driven in deep enough to stand considerable strain and must be moved frequently to protect against overgrazing and trampling. Picket stakes should be removed when breaking camp. Some horsemen picket the leader of a string with the idea that the other horses won't leave the leader if turned loose. In that respect this method usually works well; however, in a severely "herd-bound" string, the other horses will eat all of the grass within the picket circle.

Popular camp spots, grass meadows and areas along the trails can be exposed to heavy grazing pressure throughout the season. Overgrazing contributes to a reduction in vigor of grass, tramped-out appearance of meadows, opportunities for unwanted weeds to grow, or degradation of an area. Avoid grazing grass that is down to short clumps. Rotate stock throughout an area. Move pickets frequently. Some areas have insufficient grass so it may be necessary to pack in feed. Processed grain, alfalfa pellets or heat treated hay cubes should be used. Hay is not allowed in some wilderness or other back country areas because it may contain weeds. During the planning stage of your trip, consult with the responsible agency to learn of graze availability in the area of your planned trip.

17. THE CAMP SPOT

In the back country many popular camp spots have been established and used for years. They are popular because they have an attraction. The attraction may be a scenic setting, plentiful water, good fishing, grass for stock, or a flat camping area. However, when selecting your camp spot, it should be set back out of sight from main trails. Don't set up camp in a meadow, as traffic in camp will beat the vegetation flat. Choose a spot in or near trees on a durable surface that can sustain traffic. This helps to reduce stock and people congestion along main trails, offers privacy, and reduces the possibility of overuse immediately adjacent to main trails.

Camp spots should be at least 200 feet from the edge of lakes and rivers. This helps reduce the chance of water pollution and over-use immediately next to lake shores, streams, and river banks. Some old established camp spots may be closer to lakes, streams, rivers, and

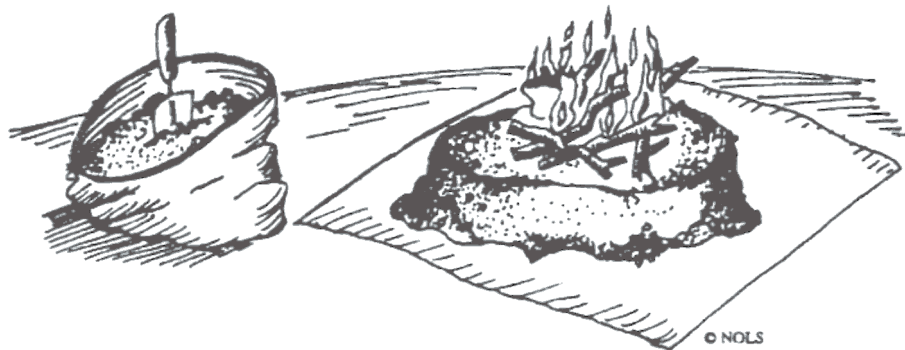
main trails than desirable.

When planning a trip, if you select camp spots that are not heavily used, spread the use on durable surfaces. These will often give you better grazing and more privacy in addition to reducing impact.

A well organized camp is set up to be convenient, efficient, and neat in appearance. An established campsite should be used if available. If not, select a spot that can handle some use without being damaged. In some areas, like National Parks, ONLY established campsites can be used. In any event, some common sense should prevail. Do not drive nails in trees. Don't dig ditches around tents. Do not cut green trees or boughs, and remove underbrush sparingly. Select a spot to obtain water where you won't be caving in the banks leaving a permanent scar. Tether your stock outside the immediate campsite.

In bear country, food must be stored so bears can't get to it. Metal cans or boxes are available in some areas. Check with local management agencies for food storage requirements or problem areas. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee has information about preparing food hoists.

In camp, if there is a suitable fire ring established, it should be used rather than creating an additional fire ring. If there is no fire ring and you wish to build one, try a mound fire within a fire blanket or firepan. A



mound fire requires a soil or sand buffer so that heat will not be transmitted to soil and vegetation. A new aluminum oil drain pan makes an inexpensive, lightweight "container" for the mound fire. If you do not use the mound method, remove the organic material down to the mineral soil. Put it aside to refill the fire pit when you break camp. Many horsemen have found that lining their fire ring with a reusable, nonflammable, fire blanket (a "used" fire fighter's personal protection blanket, often available from USFS fire depots) with two inches of dirt on top will lessen the



impact of their fire on the camp site. Put the rocks that you ring the pit with back where you found them when breaking camp. What you pack you should pack out. There should be nothing left to indicate you have been there.

When camp, tie a pole between two trees, place your gear on it, and throw a mantle over everything. When a pole isn't available, stand your saddle on the horn with the pad on top. Be careful with your equipment; porcupines and deer are fond of leather. When the stay over and camp is broken down, there are a few last minute items to check before heading out. All tent poles and frames should be taken down, rope and string removed from trees, extra fire wood scattered, and all fires dead out. Fill and smooth any paw holes and scatter any horse manure.



A SHADOW CAST

*I hate to admit to the company I'm in
But a back country jerk too often I've been.
You have seen the shadow on the mountains I cast
Because the marks I have left there last and last.
When you see that lone tree with its root laid bare
You know me and my string have often been there.
But really, does tying up to a tree over night spell its doom?
I've done it often you know, even when there is other room.
Wait a minute, I seem to recall a high mountain pass
With its cool clear water and lush green grass,
And there in the middle of this picturesque scene
Is a tall lone fir tree that's lost all its green.
What could have killed it I thought, hikers, bears, or ...
Then it hit me, my god, I've been here before.
Mother Nature made that tree to stand the wind and the snow,
It has stood the test of time and continues to grow.
She made that tree to take the worst of her work,
But she didn't plan on me, the back country jerk.
Dan Plummer*



18. FIREWOOD

Wood is the most common fuel for cooking and heat in the back country. When gathering wood, consider the following wood sources: first, gather smaller chunks of dead wood that need no cutting; second, cut wood from downed, dead trees. In some areas campfires are prohibited. Check with the managing agency if you are not sure. Green trees should never be used or their boughs should never be gathered for camp bedding. Skidding wood with stock is discouraged because it disturbs the ground cover and generally leaves a mess. Cutting wood into pieces suitable for packing by man or stock is preferred.

Everyone enjoys a campfire but consider using a lightweight gas stove for cooking in areas above the tree line where firewood is scarce and in wilderness areas.



19. PRECAUTIONS WITH FIRE

During the summer and early fall seasons the possibility of wild fire is high. One should stop in a safe place to smoke rather than smoking while hiking or riding horseback and make sure that ashes and cigarettes are dead-out. Thoroughness must be exercised when extinguishing campfires. Water alone without mixing will produce a crust over the coals and fire will continue to smolder. When extinguishing a camp fire, douse with water, mix, re-douse with water and mix the coals and water thoroughly. Then feel it. "Cold trail" it by placing back of hand two to three inches above the surface of the coals.



20. CAMP SANITATION

There is always "garbage" to care for - paper, meal scraps, cans, bottles, tinfoil, you name it, that needs to be burned or packed out. Burnable items can be burned in your campfire. Other non burnable items (cans, bottles, tinfoil, plastic) must be packed out. Odorous food cans are messy and attract flies and bears. A little trick to solve that problem is to place cans in the fire. The odor and food particles will be burned out. When the fire is cold, remove cans and smash them flat. The flat-



tened cans and other non burnable items can then be packed out. Plastic or visqueen used for shelter must be taken out of the back country. If it is not removed it will eventually be torn up into small pieces and become a subsequent litter problem. Remember, if you pack it in - please pack it out. If you can remove litter left by previous parties, good for you. You will know you have done your part and more.

If toilet facilities are not present, human waste can be disposed of by digging a small hole 6" to 8" deep. After use, fill the hole with loose soil and replace the sod. Nature will do the rest. If you have a large party or you plan to stay several days, dig a toilet pit. Save the soil and sod to be replaced when you break camp. Any of these facilities must be at least 200' from water sources.

After the camp is set up, the stock cared for, the wood gathered and supper finished, there are the kitchen chores. Dishes and cookware should be washed in a pan rather than directly in lakes, rivers, or streams. Biodegradable soap should be used. Soapy water, etc., should not be dumped in or near lakes, streams, or open water. First, screen food particles from "gray" water with a 16" x 16" sieve made from recycled plastic window screen. Scrape particles into food debris bags. The resultant gray water from washing can be scattered on the ground a good distance from camp areas and water source. If staying for a longer period of time, the dish water and wash water should be dumped in a small pit and covered when you leave. Concentrations of waste food particles tend to attract bears, flies, bees and other insects.

Horse manure in the immediate camp areas should be spread out



with your shovel, collapsible rake, or a tree branch. This aids in the decomposition process, reduces flies, and lessens the impact on the area for other users. Leaving horse manure in camp when you leave brings bad publicity to all horsemen. Walk through the area horses grazed and scatter manure piles. Before departing, take a last minute glance to see that no debris is left behind, and that the area is left in a condition you would want to find it - neat, clean, inviting and more pristine than when you arrived.

21. HUMANE DESTRUCTION OF AN INJURED HORSE

Horse ownership is indeed satisfying but, unfortunately, there are times when it can be difficult. There are many situations during handling and working with stock, when an animal may be injured. In one instance an animal may be killed in an accident or at other times the injuries (or illness) may be so serious that there is no hope for the animal. In these situations the horse must be humanely destroyed. This section deals with two issues: humane destruction of a horse, and the obligation of the owner or user in dealing with a large animal carcass.

Destruction. After an accident in the back country it is usually the case that no veterinarian is available. Every one connected with horses should know where a horse or mule must be shot to put him out of pain instantaneously. The bullet should pass through the brain and top vertebrae of the neck. The center of the brain is situated beneath a point of intersection of two lines drawn from the base of the right ear to the top of the left eye and vice versa. The bullet should travel approximately horizontal. The range should be short enough to make missing the correct spot practically impossible. If the horse is lying so that it is difficult to shoot on the correct point in his head, a shot at the back of the ear directed towards the brain will accomplish the task instantaneously. Make certain no one is standing near the horse in case of a ricochet.

Carcass. The carcass of a horse or mule presents several problems. First, the unsightly mess of a dead and decaying horse near a trail is unpleasant to all forest visitors and may spook other stock using the same trail. Second, the danger of an unsuspecting trail user being ambushed by a bear feeding on the carcass. Third, possible pollution of water sources.

The horse owner or user has an obligation to reduce or eliminate

the above problems. It is simply not acceptable to leave a dead horse or mule where it presents any of the problems listed. Over a period of time the elements and scavengers will reduce a carcass to the bones. In some places this will be acceptable, in other situations it will not be. The first attempt should be to move the animal prior to destroying it, to a suitable location **far** from trails, camps, and water sources. When this is not possible it will be necessary to remove the carcass. To remove the carcass may require it to be dismembered. An alternative method is to use explosives. Twenty pounds or more are required and can only be used with the authority and supervision of the land agency.

In summary the horse owner or user has the responsibility to properly dispose of an animal killed in an accident or destroyed as a result of injuries. If you have questions or concerns, contact the land agency.

22. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

There are increasing numbers of visitors experiencing the beauty, peacefulness and special nature of the undeveloped portions of our public lands. With more families owning horses and using the back country there is a need to impress a sense of responsibility on the user to help protect these special resources in back country areas.

Impact on the environment and practical methods to minimize adverse impact have never been examined in depth. Most of us have had a lifelong love affair with the back country and the horse has been our vehicle to enjoy it. Fortunately, the majority of horsemen have developed methods compatible with the environment. It is those who abuse the environment that we must educate.

This guidebook is not intended to be a complete text on a given subject, nor is there always unanimous agreement on every subject. Different methods work for different people and for different animals. However, it was agreed that these methods are the best known to provide a safe and enjoyable trip, with a minimum of adverse impact. If additional information is needed for a particular problem, contact any member of the Back Country Horsemen. If unfamiliar with the problem themselves, they will know who to contact. Handling horses in a manner that will have little or no adverse impact is as big a challenge as is "Leave No Trace" use. Much of our back country is in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Actions that are detrimental to this resource can-

not be permitted to continue. ALL HORSEMEN must adjust their horse handling techniques to minimize the impacts of horse use.

Many land management decisions are reached based upon comments by the public on proposed management plans. In areas of horse abuse, the public has demanded that these areas be closed to horse use. We must adjust our use so that these management decisions are not necessary.

There are no single acts that bring the horsemen poorer marks and leave more lasting results, than tying horses to trees or manure piles at trailheads and in pristine meadows. Kick those road apples apart and help to naturalize plus fertilize these beautiful areas. Many back country camps have dead or damaged trees that indicate abuse. Practice and learn to use the methods described in Section 15.

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN COMMANDMENTS

1. THE HORSEMAN SHALL NOT KEEP HORSES LONGER THAN IT TAKES TO UNPACK OR PACK THEM IN ANY CAMPSITE NORMALLY USED BY HIKERS. (WE SUGGEST HORSEMEN STAY AWAY FROM SUCH CAMPS IF POSSIBLE).
2. THE HORSEMAN SHALL NOT TIE HIS STOCK, FOR MORE THAN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, DIRECTLY TO A TREE.
3. THE HORSEMAN SHALL NOT CUT SWITCHBACKS.
4. THE HORSEMAN SHALL NOT LEAVE A CAMPFIRE UNATTENDED.
5. THE HORSEMAN SHALL PROPERLY DISPOSE OF ALL MANURE, BAILING TWINE, WIRE AND WASTE HAY IN CAMP AREAS, TRAILHEADS, OR LOADING AREAS.
6. THE HORSEMAN SHALL ABIDE BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING THE AREA HE/SHE IS IN.
7. THE HORSEMAN SHALL RECOGNIZE THE FRAGILITY OF THE BACK COUNTRY ENVIRONMENT AND PRACTICE MINIMUM IMPACT TECHNIQUES AT ALL TIMES.

In closing, it is hoped that the foregoing pages on "Environmental Concerns" will be of some benefit to protecting the back country we enjoy. Nature did its part in creating the beautiful mountains, the pure water, the tall grass, and the serene spots we treasure. It provided the setting for the memories we treasure long after the trip is over. Let us do our part to keep it beautiful, clean, and not abused by our visits and activities. Take only memories and leave only as few foot or hoof prints as possible.

23. SUMMATION

As horsemen and environmentalists we cannot allow our resources to suffer the consequences of neglect, either by an administering agency or by an uninformed public. Our desire to reduce adverse impact while continuing maximum enjoyment leaves no room for apathy or indifference.

This guidebook in itself is a major effort to help reduce adverse impact and to bring about a better understanding among the user groups. An awareness of the problems and practical solutions to the majority of them will reduce damage on the back country trip. The basis for a better understanding among user groups is also contained within these pages. There are many conclusions that can be drawn by any agency administering a back country resource on practical methods of handling horses. The message in this booklet can only be effective if the individual recognizes his or her obligations to the environment and uses the abilities at his command to protect it.

Horse owners or not, we invite you to become a member of our organization. The only requirement for membership is that you believe in the goals set forth in our PURPOSE. We are a family oriented organization and have members ranging in age from youngsters to ??

We hope that your next trip into "The Back Country" will be more enjoyable and have less impact through reading this booklet. Leave only your hoof prints in the mountains and return with only your memories - they are the ultimate reward as they can be relived countless times.



24. APPENDIX

Following is a list of books on packing information that are available in many local book or tack stores:

HORSES, HITCHES AND ROCKY TRAILS, by Joe Back

printed by Johnson Publishing Co.

Boulder, CO 80302

(Back, an old Wyoming packer, filled this book with good humor and good information)

HORSE PACKING IN PICTURES (1975) by Francis W. Davis

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York

(The best diagrams on knot and hitch tying)

PACKING IN ON MULES AND HORSES (1980)

by Smoke Elser & Bill Brown

The Mountain Press Publishing Co. 283 West Front Street

Missoula, MT 59801

(Smoke is a Back Country Horseman. His book has more good information than any of the others.)

HORSE CAMPING (1981) by George Hatley – The Dial Press

1 Dag Hammerskjold Plaza

New York, NY 10017

(A very good book by the founder of the Appaloosa Horse Club)

MANUAL OF PACK TRANSPORTATION, 1916 Revision by Quail Ranch

Books 2210 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 573

Santa Monica, CA 90403

(The old Army Manual, very interesting)

PACKING AND OUTFITTING MANUAL by Oliver C. Hill

Agricultural Extension Service – Bulletin No. 636

University of Wyoming, P. O. Box 3313

Laramie, WY 82071

LEAVE NO TRACE OUTDOOR SKILLS & ETHICS

Back Country Horse Use

20325 Remount Road

Huson MT 59846 • 1-800-332-4100

REGIONAL FORAGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (Brochure)

State of Wyoming, Dept of Agriculture

Cheyenne WY 82002-0100

HORSE SENSE ON NATIONAL FOREST PACK TRIPS

(Pamphlet), USDA Forest Service Northern Region

P. O. Box 7669

Missoula MT 59807

HORSE SENSE, A GUIDE TO MINIMUM IMPACT HORSE PACKING

(Video)

Idaho Back Country Horsemen (\$31)

P. O. Box 68

Kooskia ID 83539

MOUNTAIN MANNERS (Booklet)

Montana Back Country Horsemen

P. O. Box 5431

Helena MT 59604

MOUNTAIN MANNERS (Video)

Idaho Back Country Horsemen

HC 66, Box 248

Kooskia ID 83536

TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT FOR WILDERNESS HORSE

TRAVEL (Booklet & Video)

USDA Forest Service, Regional Offices

TREAD LIGHTLY CREW (Pamphlet)

TRAIL ETIQUETTE & COURTESY (Pamphlet)

Back Country Horsemen of Washington

11839 Glenwood Road SW

Port Orchard WA 98366

VETERINARY MEDICINE FOR BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

Kern Sierra Unit, BCH California

P. O. Box 11095

Bakersfield CA 93389-1095

GHOST RIDERS...LEAVE NO TRACE (Video)

Friends of Banff National Park (\$25 US)

Banff National Park

Box 900

Banff, AB, Canada T0L 0C0

GENTLE USER (Pocket Guide)

BCH California

P. O. Box 520

Springville CA 93265

CAMPING CHECK LIST

This list contains most of the things one might want to take on **any** type of camping trip. It is **not** the intent that you take all of these items, but just those that suit your particular outing. **Remember** - Pack it out, take it home, leave all camps cleaner than you found them.

CAMP

Tent	Coleman Fuel/Propane	Plates
Ground Cloth/Scrim	Stove	Hotcake Turner
Tarp	Mantles & Funnel	Silverware
Rope	Fry Pan	Cups
Ax	Griddle	Dish Soap, biodegradable
Hatchet	Kettles & Lids	Scouring Pad
Saw	Butcher Knife	Dish Pan
Shovel	Coffee Pot	Dish Towel
Water Bucket	Can Opener	Paper Towels
Folding Rake	Spoon (Large)	Dish Cloth
Lantern	Potato Peeler	Fire Blanket/Campfire
Pan		

GRUB

Salt and Pepper	Catsup	Vegetables (Canned)
Sugar	Mayonnaise	Vegetables (Fresh)
Hot Cake Flour	Jam	Onions
Biscuit Mix	Honey	Potatoes
Crisco	Bacon*	Oatmeal
Coffee	Eggs	Juice
Meats (Fresh/Canned)	Kool Aid/Tang/Crystal Light	Tea
Cocoa	Lunch Meat	Candy
Milk (Canned/Boxed)	Cheese	Snacks
Syrup	Soup	Beverages
Butter	Fruit (Canned/Fresh)	

*Do not use in Grizzly Bear country

PERSONAL

Money	Gloves	Binoculars
Sleeping Bag	Towel	Sun Glasses
Soap, biodegradable	Wash Cloth	Flashlight
Tooth Brush	Tooth Paste	Batteries & Bulbs (Spare)
Camera/Film/Batteries	Toilet Paper	Thermos
Alarm Clock	Prescription Drugs	Handwarmers
Clothes	First Aid Kit	Tools
Shoes/boots	Matches, water proof	Insect Repellent
Rain Gear	Knife	Small trenching tool
Identification	Map/Compass	

FISHING

License
Fishing Laws
Punch Card
Pole/Reel

Leader
Sinkers
Hooks
Creel

Lure/Bait/Fish Eggs
Small Pliers
Net

HUNTING

License/Tags
Guns/Ammo
Hunting Knife

Cleaning Kit
Hunting Laws

Meat Bags
Knap Sack

HORSES

Halter and Lead
Warming Blanket
Hoof Pick
Comb and Brush
Bridle
Saddle
Saddle Pad
Saddle Bag
Tree Savers

Breast Strap
Britchin/Crupper
Rifle Scabbard
Hobbles
Lariat
Chaps
Pack Saddle and Pad
Lash Cinch and Tarp/Mantie
Easy Boot

High Line
Feed Bags
Grain/Pellets
Hay, weed seed free
First Aid Kit
Fly Repellent
Horseshoe Nails
Supplements/Meds

Check with agencies in advance for any special regulations on endangered species,
Grizzly Bear Habitat.

NOTES

WHOA, HORSEMEN!

Do you want to keep public lands and trails open for horse use in years to come? It's up to you! **Back Country Horsemen of America** was formed with a three-fold purpose: to volunteer service in the backcountry, to educate horsemen on minimum impact horse handling, and to get involved in land use planning.

BCH clubs have formed in 13 states.

If you are interested in forming a BCH club to perpetuate back country horse use, or if you want more information, write:

Back Country Horsemen of America

22815 168th Ave E, Graham WA 98338 – (360) 893-5161

or • P. O. Box 597, Columbia Falls MT 59912-0597

or write to these state clubs:

BCH of Arizona

Rt 4 Box 739

Flagstaff AZ 86001

BCH of the Ozarks

HC 33 Box 51

Compton AR 72624

BCH of California

PO Box 520

Springville, CA 93265

BCH of Colorado

P. O. Box 41

Penrose CO 81240

BCH of Idaho

PO Box 513

Salmon, ID 83467

BCH of Montana

P.O. Box 2121

Missoula, MT 59806

BCH of Nevada

P. O. Box 22021

Carson City NV 89721

BCH of New Mexico

P. O. Box 53941

Albuquerque NM 87153

BCH of North Carolina

P. O. Box 158

Junaluska NC 28745

BCH of Oregon

c/o P. O. Box 397

LaGrande OR 97850-0397

BCH of Utah

P. O. Box 13195

Ogden UT 84412

BCH of Washington

11839 Glenwood

Port Orchard, WA 98366

BCH of Wyoming

c/o P. O. Box 3194

Gillette WY 82717-3194

A MESSAGE FROM:



United States
Department of
Agriculture

TAKE STOCK IN YOUR BACK COUNTRY and

LEAVE
NO
TRACE



Horses

(mules, burros, and llamas, too)

- ✓ Take only the minimum number of animals needed.
 - ✓ During short stops, tie horses to trees at least 8" in diameter - hobble if they paw.
 - ✓ For long periods, tie horses to a high line stretched between two sturdy trees, 8"+ in diameter.
 - ✓ If you picket horses, move them often.
 - ✓ Keep tied, picketed, and hobbled horses well away from camp and from lakes and streams.
 - ✓ Tie, picket, hobble or fence horses only in dry areas to minimize trampling damage.
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Additional copies may be obtained, as available by writing:

Back Country Horsemen of America

22815 168th Ave E
Graham WA 98338 7609

or

P O Box 597
Columbia Falls MT 59912